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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1797
INFO RUEHZJ/HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY 0407
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY 0557
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0912
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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 006511

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TAGS: PREL PHUM UNHRC PINR CU FR

SUBJECT: FRENCH MFA PLEADS FOR USG TO SEEK HRC SEAT

REF: A. STATE 156800 B. STATE 160278 C. PARIS 6436 D.

PARIS 6498

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Josiah B. Rosenblatt.
Reasons 1.4b,d

¶11. (C) MFA IO PDAS-Equivalent Marc Giacomini welcomed reftel
demarche with affirmations of broad agreement between French
and U.S. positions on the Human Rights Council (HRC) during a
9/27 meeting with poloff (ref A). Giacomini concurred on the
necessity of maintaining country-specific mandate and that
condemnatory resolutions were an appropriate HRC function.
He did not however view the option of a review of extant
country-specific resolutions as problematic. Giacomini
acknowledged OIC efforts to gear the new HRC toward
consistent Israel-bashing. He averred that OIC initiatives
were forcing awkward situations and choices for EU-members.

¶12. (C) Giacomini repeatedly appealed for the USG to seek a
seat on the HRC. USG membership represented the only chance,
he believed, to straighten out the HRC. Our absence left
France on the spot in countering divisive OIC initiatives.
Giacomini noted that HRC membership for the USG would be
awkward in some regards, specifically on Guantanamo, where
the USG remained highly vulnerable -- and thereby weakened
its partners as well, he said. He believed the USG had
committed a blunder by not facilitating the visit of the UN
human rights experts to Guantanamo and their request for
direct and unmonitored meetings with detainees. Special
Rapporteur on Torture Manfred Nowak was not a threat to the
USG, he asserted. Giacomini pointed out that the French
Government had allowed the same UN human rights experts
unimpeded access to former French detainees after their return
from Guantanamo (and incarceration in France).

¶13. (C) Giacomini reiterated French agreement with the USG
on the need to maintain the HRC mandate on Cuba (Refs B, C).
He recalled that the Special Rapporteur-equivalent for Cuba,
Christine Chanet, was a French citizen. He regretted that
Cuba continued to block her access to the country, thereby
obliging her to issue reports derived from second-hand
information.

¶14. (U) Reftel D reports Giacomini's comments on the
Venezuelan drive for a Security Council seat.

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